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THE MUSICAL JOURNAL.

AUGUST, 1908.

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The twentieth annual festival of the Nonconformist Choir Union, held at the Crystal Palace on July 4, was admitted on all sides to be a great success. Unfortunately the severe thunderstorm during the previous night made the weather very threatening, but it did not damp the enthusiasm of the singers, who turned up smiling. The number of singers and instrumentalists passing the turnstiles was 4,220, the largest number in the history of the Union, and probably the largest number of adult performers that has ever taken part in a concert at the Palace. It was a special occasion, and many choirs which have not recently taken part in the festivals attended this year. The musical result was highly satisfactory. There was more spirit about the singing than usual, and the part songs were lighter and brighter. The orchestra was revived and enlarged, and rendered much assistance in several of the choral items. Owing to his long illness (from which he has now happily recovered), Mr. Fountain Meen was unable to take his usual place at the organ; but an efficient substitute was found in Mr. J. A. Meale, F.R.C.O., of the Queen's Hall Wesleyan Mission, Hull.

A new departure was made this year in getting Dr. Macnamara, M.P., Secretary of the Admiralty, to give away the prizes to the winning choirs in the competitions. As might have been expected, he performed this duty admirably, his brief but interesting and amusing speech being received with loud applause.

♦♦♦♦

Mr. Minshall having resolved to retire from the conductor's desk, after holding that position since the formation of the Union in 1888, the committee determined to present him with a testimonial. The choirs and outside friends responded heartily to the committee's appeal, and during the concert Dr. Macnamara presented him with a very handsome silver shield and bookcase, and his daughter with a gold watch bracelet. The enthusiastic demonstration of goodwill shown by the choir as the presentation was made touched Mr. Minshall deeply, and it was with difficulty he could control his feelings sufficiently to make even a very brief acknowledgment of so much kindness. He would like to take this opportunity of thanking most sincerely everyone who took an interest in the presentation, and to the members of the choir for their hearty expression of affection and esteem.

♦♦♦♦

The new conductor will not be appointed till the autumn; but we believe there will be no difficulty in securing the services of a thoroughly capable man. We look forward with hopefulness to the future of the Union.

♦♦♦♦

It may be an appropriate time to give some figures showing the work done by the Union during its twenty years' existence. About 70,000 singers have been taken to the Crystal Palace; the sum of £200 has been given in prizes; £5,000 has been paid for music, which has been supplied to the choirs at considerably less than they would have paid for it in the usual way. And yet no fee or subscription is imposed upon any choir joining the Union!

♦♦♦♦

A correspondent writes: "I was at the opening of a new Baptist chapel the other day. One of the speakers was urging the necessity of everything in the services of the church being done decently and in order. The minister of the place was one of the loudest in saying 'Hear, hear' to that injunction. A few minutes later he announced the collection and invited the people to fill up the forms, promising subscriptions, which had been distributed in the pews. The collection commenced and the organist began a voluntary. While the playing was going on, the minister got up and shouted, 'Don't forget to fill up the forms. Hand them to the collectors in the aisles, who will bring them up.' That was certainly not doing things

decently and in order. Surely he might have waited till the voluntary was finished." We should like to know what the reverend gentleman would have said if the organist had commenced his voluntary while he was appealing for the collection.

♦♦♦♦

We are glad to hear that the Saturday night

free concerts given by Mr. F. A. Atkins during the past few winters at Bloomsbury Central Church are not to be discontinued, but are to be transferred to Whitefield's Tabernacle, Tottenham Court-road. They will commence in October. Some County Council requirements at Bloomsbury prevented their being held there in future.

Passing Notes.

THE newspaper people have been reminding us that we ought to have been celebrating the centenary of the birth of Michael William Balfe. Centenaries much less worthy of note have certainly been "marked"; and, looking to the phenomenal popularity of "The Bohemian Girl," I do not see why poor Balfe should have been ignored in that way. Strauss, parent and patriarch of all the Strausses, called Balfe "The King of Melody"; and whatever the superfine modern critic may say about the superficial character of "The Bohemian Girl," I hold to my youthful opinion of it as a string of melodic pearls. After all, as Mozart said, melody is the thing that counts. As head of a church choir for many years, I can testify that "When other Lips" has never been omitted from the list of melodies lilted in course of the drive home from the annual picnic. And how often do we still hear "Killarney" off the concert platform! I have a tender regard for Balfe; and it pleases me to think that his grandfather was a pupil of that same Dubourg who, as a violinist, played at the first performance of "The Messiah" at Dublin in 1742.

Still, I cannot go quite so far as Mr. Bart Kennedy, who describes Balfe as a "great" musician. Perhaps you know nothing of Bart—have never even heard his name? Well, Bart is a sort of literary tramp who has been over nearly all the civilised world. He began life in a mechanic's shop in Manchester, and having taught himself to sing, won admission to the famous Hallé Choir. Then, restless as ever, he worked his way out to America, where, getting stranded, he turned his musical training to good account, and so became a member of an operatic chorus. His experience is told in "A Tramp's Philosophy," recently published, which I have been reading during my usual July North Sea trip to Antwerp. Here is a short quotation:

I remember how delighted I used to feel when I was on the stage, in the old days, singing in the Gipsy Chorus of "The Bohemian Girl." A lifting, ringing, joyful chorus. As I sang it, I felt all the joy of the wanderer. The great musician, Balfe, had caught the whole of the magic and beauty of the gipsy's life in his wonderful chorus. I think a great artist must have in him the wanderer's instinct. This Gipsy Chorus in "The Bohemian Girl" is one of the greatest things in music.

Oh, Bart, surely not! Great to you, perhaps, because of the old memories, but not to be placed

anywhere near the great things of the really classic composers.

Bart Kennedy's musical tastes are his own, in large measure. Describing a visit to Madame Tussaud's, he gets in this about one of the figures there:

How grand is the face of Verdi, the great musician of Italy, who wrote immortal operas. Say not that his beautiful, human, soul-stirring music will fade into a half-forgetfulness. Say not that it is the music of the past. Say not that it will not live. For it will live as long as human emotion and passion. This fine Verdi—he wove for humanity sound-pictures glorious and magical.

There is enthusiasm for you! Everybody does not think so highly of Verdi. A well-known Bostonian relates that when Herr von Bülow was in Boston, Napier Lowthion, musical director at the Boston Theatre, introduced him, saying: "Herr von Bülow, this is Mr. Rice, a Boston man, who knows nothing about music whatever, but who has written two operas." "So?" said Bülow, interrogatively. "Ve haf also in Europe a shentleman vat knows nothing about moosic, und haf written already plenty operas—Meestor Verdi." I doubt if Bülow, with all his caustic wit, ever said anything of the kind. I am beginning to think that De Quincey was right when he said all anecdotes are lies.

I have been reading a most learned book, by Mr. Joseph Goddard, on "The Rise of Music from its Primitive Beginnings to Modern Effect." Mr. Goddard practically begins away back at the Creation! I admire the fertility of the imagination which, in the absence of authentic details, or, indeed, details of any sort, can revive for us, as it were, the style of music which was in vogue, and the kind of musical instruments which were played about the time that Noah was getting his Zoological Garden into the ark. But I must confess that my archaeological instincts are not so strong as to excite in me an enthusiasm for purely problematical speculations about the music of the early Jews and the early Greeks and Romans. I am content to rest my interests on the masterpieces of music belonging to what Mr. Goddard calls "the fully-constituted art." In other words, I am mainly concerned with the era this side of Sebastian Bach, or, at the farthest, Palestrina. Still, it takes all sorts of people to make a world, and there are erudite minds who will enjoy even these hundred

and thirty odd pages of Mr. Goddard's book, in which the B.C. period of music finds its learned (and hypothetical) exposition.

I cordially join with a writer in one of the literary weeklies in lamenting the passing of the folk-song. In the old world that is now fast vanishing everywhere, song was an important, and, indeed, essential, element. It entered into every incident of rural life to an extent quite inconceivable to the present generation. It was in the field, at the alehouse and by the fireside. Ask Mr. Baring Gould, and he will tell you. The waggoner sang on his load, and the milkers carolled in turn to the humming of the milk against

their pails. All writers about old village-life, who knew what they were writing about, have given unconscious testimony to this. Alas! it has all gone. Just as the invention of gunpowder blew an old order of things to the winds, so the introduction of machinery and rapid locomotion have brought in a new epoch. It is inevitable, I suppose. The world advances, and we must believe that things go for the best. Yet now that one hears the inane, idiotic rubbish of the music-halls in the most remote hamlet, who will not lament the passing of the good old song? One has only to read such a literary classic as Thomas Hardy's "Under the Greenwood Tree," to realise what we have lost. No wonder Hardy is a pessimist!

J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

Musical Notes and Queries.

BY ORLANDO A. MANSFIELD, MUS.DOC., TRINITY UNIVERSITY, TORONTO; F.R.C.O.;
L.MUS.L.C.M.; L.MUS.T.C.L.

(Author of "The Student's Harmony," Editor of "The Woolhouse Edition," etc., etc.)

TALES told at the expense of the organ-blower are certainly numerous, perhaps more numerous than convincing. But the musical compositor is a comparatively neglected individual, although, as a matter of fact, he is an unconscious humorist of considerable standing. Indeed, in the matter of organ specifications, it is doubtful whether he has a rival. The man who boldly inserted, "Triumph, 8 ft.," in his specification, was not an organ builder but a printer. No builder of repute would ever blow his trumpet at such a high pressure as this. Another compositor, probably of a cantankerous disposition, caused "Great, 15th" to appear as "Great Fifteenth"; another, with a botanical turn of mind, substituted "Full with Seeds" for "Full with Reeds"; while a third, more ecclesiastically inclined, set up "Church, 8 ft.," instead of "Choir, 8 ft."

Nor are things any better on the other side of the Atlantic. The American compositor who set up "Swell to Olives" for "Swell to Oboe," must surely have been a chemist's assistant in a previous incarnation. But the prize for facetiousness ought surely to be awarded to the Canadian compositor who, after the perpetration of such verbal atrocities as "vile d. gamba," and "vile de orchestra," for Viola da Gamba and Viole d'Orchestre," included in an organ scheme a "dropped flute 8 ft." In this country we should expect a flute dropped eight feet to be more or less mute. But in Canada "dropped flute" is evidently Doppelflöte writ large.

This reminds me of the compositor who, on the occasion of an organ recital at which I had undertaken to play Guilman's March on a Theme from Handel (Hommage à Thalberg), Op. 15, No. 2, represented me as promising to perform "March on, a Theme from Handel." On being remonstrated with by a friend, he remarked, "Dear me,

I have put a comma. Of course, it ought to be a mark of exclamation." And had he not been physically, financially, or otherwise restrained, he would have put me down to play, "March on! a Theme from Handel." This is almost as bad as the true story of the verger who announced that, in consequence of the breakdown of the hydraulic engine at his church on the previous Sunday, the organist was unable to use the *Open Diabetes* stop. But there is comfort as well as humour about this story. For the man who failed to distinguish between Diapason and Diabetes was not a compositor, but a verger.

The approaching removal of my friend, the Rev. H. Norman Startup, from the Birkenhead Wesleyan Methodist Circuit, will be a distinct loss to Free Church music in that neighbourhood. For although his name is scarcely ever seen in connection with local musical functions, Mr. Startup is the fortunate possessor of a musical enthusiasm as intense as it is practical. During his three years' residence in Birkenhead he has started a Men's Meeting, which has been a success from the beginning, the chief attractions having been good speaking and first-rate music. Starting with a string quartett, Mr. Startup has gone from strength to strength, until he has a fairly complete orchestra, performing symphonic movements and other classical and modern selections. It is greatly to be desired that the hands of the conductor, Mr. Edge, should be upheld by the church and by Mr. Startup's successor. Musical organisations so successfully started should be endowed with a view to permanence; and not made, as Mr. Asquith would term it, "contingent upon a remote and speculative future."

Judging from recent correspondence in musical papers, and from information gleaned at first hand, it is fully demonstrated that, as an executant, Mr.

David Clegg has immense powers and capabilities. This, however, only serves to deepen the mystery surrounding the reason for his prostitution of these powers to such ignoble ends as the constant production in his organ performances of "storm" and other so-called "realistic" effects. No one who has any acquaintance with, or appreciation of Nature in her stormier moods could do more than merely tolerate any mimicry of these moods, even when exhibited upon the king of instruments, and by the most skilful performer. But when almost whole programmes are filled with these devices, expressed none too grammatically as regards harmony or form, the effect produced upon a musical listener is little less than nauseating, or, to say the least, monotonous in the extreme. Thousands of people attend regularly the recitals of legitimate organ music and arrangements given by such distinguished recitalists as Peace, Lemare, Perkins, and Hollins. Why does not Mr. Clegg join this glorious fellowship? The intelligent section of the British public is always ready to welcome a true artist. As a hard-headed Lancashire man, Mr. Clegg should know that, while art is eternally fresh, mere claptrap and "effects" grow stale, and cease to be even financially remunerative.

Another point in Mr. Clegg's recitals—a point to which considerable exception has been taken—is the issuing of programmes containing titles of works which musicians of authority on the point declare were never written by the composers who names they bear. Thus pieces have been announced by Bach, Rheinberger, Saint-Saëns, and other masters, which cannot be traced, and the performance of which has sometimes turned out to be a series of "firework" variations upon an extremely watery theme. In the case of living composers, ought not some steps to be taken to prevent their being credited with these perversions? And, in the case of churches, are they wise in allowing these performances to be given? At least, it should be seen that the programme is announced as one of the recitalist's original compositions and peculiar "effects." Whether it is desirable to have a music-

hall performance in a church is another question—a question the consideration of which I earnestly commend to my Anglican friends who are strong on what they are pleased to term "consecrated" buildings.

So many correspondents have been enquiring whether I have seen or heard Mr. Hamish MacCunn's music to the Pageant of Darkness and Light, that it may be just as well for me if, at this time and in this place, I answer the first question in the affirmative, and the second in the negative. As the Free Churches have not yet felt it their duty to send their organists to the Orient with travelling expenses and hotel bills paid, my only opportunity of hearing the music has been that opportunity which is open to every musician who has half-a-crown to spare, viz., to hear the music with the eyes and see it with the ears. Judging as well as one can from a pianoforte score, I am delighted to see that, spite of this neurotic age, Mr. MacCunn has not wholly weighed the diatonic anchor. On the contrary, he has more than realised the importance of smooth diatonic progressions for bold and dignified choral effects, as witness the last chorus of the first Episode, and the music to Episode V., the quartett in the latter being, as a pure example of diatonic triads and their inversions, one of the finest of its kind. In pageant music there is, of course, but little opportunity for those formal solos and choruses which continue the popularity of a work after the circumstances which called it into being have passed away. Notwithstanding this, I believe much of the music will enjoy a separate and permanent existence. Such numbers as the Solo and Chorus, "Lighten our darkness," the opening Duet and Chorus of Episode IV., and the whole of the music to Episode V., deserve a hearing long after the Orient in London has closed its doors. Indeed, I am not quite sure that, having regard to the circumstances under which the work was written, the purpose it was intended to serve, and the proportions governing its construction, I do not prefer this work to some of the larger specimens of its composer's skill I have had the privilege of perusing.

Lines and Spaces.

BY J. R. GRIFFITHS, MUS. BAC.

I WAS interested in reading Mr. Barnes' remarks anent the tune St. Anne, quoted by Mr. Cuthbert Hadden in his "Passing Notes" last month. Yes, with Mr. Hadden I was quite familiar with the tune which Dr. Hopkins published in the first division of his Temple Tune-Book, as the original from which, in his opinion, St. Anne sprang. The book in question is on my shelves, and many years ago I had marked the two tunes (Nos. 117 and 135) on account of the resemblance in the opening phrase to St. Anne. I quite agree with Mr. Hadden as to the coincidence theory. One has

only to jot down the opening strain of all the tunes in any modern tune-book to find examples of this. One such that readily occurs to me is Baker's well-known tune Whitburn (also called Hesperus), the first strain of which, both in melody and harmony, is identical with Elvey's St. Crispin. (See Nos. 41 and 249 in the Church Hymnary.) Another instance, and one involving identity in two strains, occurs in the tunes Panis Celestis (Calkin) and Vespers (Prothero), numbered respectively 482 and 552 in the Congregational Hymnal. The last two strains of each, with the exception of one alto note,

are identical in melody and harmony, and almost identical in rhythm. There is no doubt whatever that in these cases the similarity was purely a coincidence. And so far as concerns the first phrase of St. Anne, it has such a broad diatonic outline that any composer—and especially one used to contrapuntal *canti-fermi*—would instinctively use it, whether as a melody or a bass.

* * * * *

Talking of tunes reminds me of the impression, or, shall I say, the want of impression, which the tune at the close of the Orient pageant made upon many of the hearers. I was not there myself, but I have spoken to several people who were, and most of them said that to them the hymn at the close seemed out of place. Coming immediately upon the top of a performance largely interpreted by professional help, and resembling more or less a theatrical display, the hymn did not appeal to them with any solemnity whatever. Of course, to others it may have appealed differently; none of us are built on the same lines. But I have often noticed incongruity in such matters, especially where a hymn or prayer is inserted just to give a religious flavour to the performance. I have in mind several secular concerts I have been to where the proceedings commenced with a prayer! Now, I quite hold that we should act religiously in every little detail of our life; but I would no more insert a prayer or hymn at a secular concert than I would at the opening of a cricket or bowling match. Hymns and prayers are naturally associated with *worship*, and are in their place when we meet to worship God. When we meet for a concert, or a cricket match, we meet for the purpose of recreation, and to insert a hymn here is as much out of place as to insert *tableaux vivant* in a religious service.

* * * * *

What a shock it was to hear lately of the premature death of that gifted musician, Dr. Frank Sawyer! His career had been so brilliant and full of promise, and he had united in himself so much that was genial on the one hand, and effective and capable on the other, that the news of his death must have been a painful surprise to all who knew him. I think the last occasion on which I spoke to him was at the house of a mutual friend in Kennington, and I well remember the charm of his manner as we sauntered among the trees in the garden. He was full of anecdote, and always pleasantly reminiscent of his stay in Leipzig. I shall think of him with renewed interest in a few days when visiting this city, so full of musical memories. His lectures at the College of Organists will long be remembered by those of us who attended them, especially those dealing with improvisation, a subject in which he was practically as well as theoretically a master. I doubt not that the proposed memorial to him will be one worthy of his memory, and the idea of creating an annual prize in connection with the Royal College of Organists is an excellent one.

Dr. Sawyer was much sought after as a teacher, and though he was thoroughly conversant with conservative lines in teaching harmony and counterpoint, he was at the same time up to date in bringing before his pupils the works of representative modern composers, and the freer use of progressions which the study of such works revealed. He thus kept an open mind towards whatever was new. It is thus that teachers of a progressive nature are the most valuable, and the link between such a teacher and his pupils is strong. In such cases teachers often learn much from their pupils, owing to the necessity of presenting the same truth in differing ways. The Abbé Vogler, who taught Weber and other celebrated men, confesses to the truth of this in some valuable remarks of his published in Weber's Letters. Speaking of his method of teaching, he says of his pupils: "I frequently set before each and all a very difficult task; every morning and afternoon we hear and analyse one of my works, or those of some other person, but always classical composers. I frequently impart to them the fruits of fifty-six years' study; nay, they frequently learn from the man of sixty-two what he did not himself know at sixty-one, *because they helped him to discover it.*"

* * * * *

Speaking of teaching, has it ever struck our readers what a mistake it is to have large folio instruction books for *young* children? (I am thinking now of children from the age of six to nine.) There is a great need for such elementary books in an *oblong* form, so that young children may not have to look far from the keys to the music page. At present, when they are reading anything on the top of the page, the result is most trying to their patience. Such young beginners feel they must look at the keys after reading the note they have to play, in order to see if they have struck the right one. And, as often as not, when they look back on the page, they have to find the place afresh. It is not so important during their lessons, as the teacher can keep his pencil on the spot; but it *is important* when the pupil is alone and practising up for his lesson. Much weariness must inevitably be the result.



NATIONAL TEMPERANCE FETE.

The annual fête was held at the Crystal Palace on July 11th. In the afternoon the children, under Mr. S. H. Cooper, gave a good concert. In the evening the adult choir, conducted by Mr. W. E. Green, of Portsmouth, presented an excellent programme, which was much enjoyed. It comprised the chorus, "Fixed in His Everlasting Seat," from Handel's "Samson"; Morley's dainty ballet, "My Bonnie Lass She Smiled"; and Laurent de Rillé's "The Martyrs of the Arena." Mr. F. Wilson Parish lent aid at the organ at both concerts. Various choral competitions were held during the afternoon, with Mr. S. Coleridge-Taylor as adjudicator.

Master Musicians.

MR. R. WATKIN MILLS.

MR. R. WATKIN MILLS has long been regarded by the public and the musical critics as one of the finest singers of the bass solos in Handel's oratorios. Though he is equally good in works of other composers, it is true that the airs of the immortal composer seem specially to suit his voice and style. Ever since he applied himself to a musical career he has devoted his gifts particularly to Handel and the traditional rendering of his many popular solos, and he is to-day, therefore, one of the highest authorities on the subject. His fame, which extends all

and lower until it ultimately became baritone. When only nineteen years of age he took the bass solos in the *Messiah*, in the Shire Hall, Gloucester, and so great was his success that a very bright future was at once predicted for him by those capable of judging.

At this time Dr. S. S. Wesley was the renowned organist of Gloucester Cathedral, and Mr. Watkin Mills went to him for instruction and advice. For a year he studied under him and made excellent progress. Dr. Wesley formed a very high opinion of his pupil, and strongly advised him to go to London as soon as possible, adding, "With your voice and natural talent you will assuredly become a great singer." At that time the way was not open for the young singer to get to London. But there was a vacancy for a vicar choral at Wells Cathedral, and having applied and competed, he was appointed to the position. There he remained nine years, and the experience he gained of the method and style of rendering sacred music was invaluable to him. With affection he speaks of "dear old Lavington," the then organist, from whom he gained much useful knowledge. Unhappily, some time afterwards, he had the great misfortune to lose his only child, and this bereavement so upset both himself and his wife that a removal from Wells became necessary. London was the centre of attraction, and Mr. Mills finally decided to go there.

Mr. Edwin Holland, a once famous singing master, took Mr. Watkin Mills in hand on his arrival in London, and for nearly a year gave him lessons, from which he greatly benefited. But believing that Continental teaching and experience would be beneficial, the young vocalist went to Milan and placed himself under the tuition of the celebrated Maestro Federico Blasco. Of the instruction he received from that teacher he speaks in the highest terms. Whatever qualities he has in voice production, clearness of enunciation, and breadth of phrasing he attributes largely to the Italian master. So rapid and satisfactory was his progress that he was strongly urged to remain in Italy and go in entirely for an operatic career. But just at that time there seemed to be a very favourable opening for a good baritone vocalist for Festival and general concert work in England, so he resolved to return to his native country. The decision proved a very fortunate one, for almost at once Mr. Watkin Mills made a name for himself as an oratorio singer of unusual ability, and his career ever since has been one of increasing success. It was on January 1st, 1885, that he first appeared in the Albert Hall in the *Messiah*, with Mesdames Valleria, Patey, and Mr. Edward Lloyd, when he received a great ovation from the crowded audience. Since then he has appeared in the Handel



[Photo]

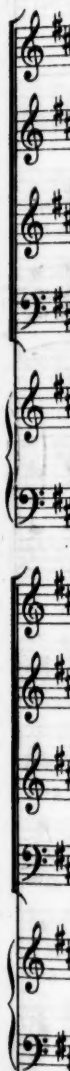
[Pitcher, Gloucester.

over the world, has been gained by hard and conscientious work.

Mr. Watkin Mills was born in the little town of Painswick, near Gloucester. He came of musical parents, and developed a love of the divine art at a very early period. He believes he could sing before he could walk. This early indication of musical talent was fostered and encouraged by his parents, and as soon as he was big enough to be visible above the desk, he was taken into the choir of the Congregational Church in his native town. His voice strengthened and improved, and in a very short time he became a soloist, his singing being very much appreciated. Curious to relate, his voice never broke, in the ordinary acceptance of the term, but it first became alto and dropped lower

Words
and

ORGA



Tonic S

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Full Anthem for Harvest or general use.

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and one verse from a Hymn.

W. HENRY MAXFIELD, Mus Bac., F. R. C. O.

Allegro moderato. $\text{♩} = 132$

ORGAN.

Soprano.
O give thanks, give thanks un-to the Lord, give thanks un-to the Lord, O give

Alto.
O give thanks, give thanks un-to the Lord, give thanks un-to the Lord,

Tenor.
O give thanks, give thanks un-to the Lord, give thanks un-to the Lord,

Bass.
O give thanks, give thanks un-to the Lord, give thanks un-to the Lord,

Ped.

thanks, give thanks, O give thanks un-to the Lord, for

O give thanks, O give thanks un-to the Lord, for

O give thanks, O give thanks, give thanks un-to the Lord, for

O give thanks, O give thanks un-to the Lord, for

Swell

Man.

Tonic Solfa Series No. 455. Price 1d corresponds with this number.

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cres.

He is gra-cious, He is gra-cious, and His mer-cy en-dur-eth for ev-er, His

He is gra-cious, He is gra-cious, and His mer-cy en-dur-eth for ev-er, His

He is gra-cious, He is gra-cious, and His mer-cy en-dur-eth for ev-er, His

He is gra-cious, He is gra-cious, and His mer-cy en-dur-eth for ev-er, His

Great

mer-cy en-dur-eth for ev-er, His mer-cy en-dur-

mer-cy en-dur-eth for ev-er, His mer-cy en-dur-eth for

mer-cy en-dur-eth for ev-er, His mer-cy en-dur-eth for

mer-cy en-dur-eth for ev-er, His mer-cy en-dur-

eth for ev-er. *ff* O give thanks, give thanks un-to the Lord, give

ev-er, for ev-er. *ff* O give thanks, give thanks un-to the Lord, give

ev-er, for ev-er. *ff* O give thanks, give thanks un-to the Lord, give

eth for ev-er. *ff* O give thanks, give thanks un-to the Lord, give

Full.

thanks un-to the Lord, give thanks un-to the Lord.

thanks un-to the Lord, give thanks un-to the Lord.

thanks un-to the Lord, give thanks un-to the Lord.

thanks un-to the Lord, give thanks un-to the Lord.

Little slower ♩ = 120.

no pause

mf and of great

mf and of great

mf For Thou, Lord, art good and gra-cious.

For Thou, Lord, art good and gra-cious,

cres. mer-cy, and of great mer-cy un-to all them that call up-on Thee.

cres. mer-cy, and of great mer-cy un-to all them that call up-on Thee.

cres. and of great mer-cy un-to all them that call up-on Thee.

and of great mer-cy un-to all them that call up-on Thee.

cres. Gt. 8ft only

Quartette or Semi-chorus or as a Solo Soprano or Tenor.

Andante. $\text{♩} = 96$. *mf*

Thou visit-est the earth and blessest it, and blessest it, Thou

Thou visit-est, Thou visit-est the earth and blessest it, Thou

Thou visit-est the earth and blessest it, and blessest it, Thou

Thou visit-est, Thou visit-est the earth and blessest it, Thou

Ped.

cres.

mak-est, Thou mak-est it ve-ry plen-teous, Thou crownest the year with Thy good-

mak-est, Thou mak-est it ve-ry plen-teous, Thou crownest the year with Thy good-

mak-est, Thou mak-est it ve-ry plen-teous, Thou crownest the year with Thy good-

mak-est, Thou mak-est it ve-ry plen-teous, Thou crownest the year with Thy

cres.

dim.

ness, and Thy clouds drop fat-ness, Thy clouds drop fat-ness, Thou vis-it-est the

ness, and Thy clouds drop fat-ness, Thy clouds drop fat-ness, Thou

ness, and Thy clouds drop fat-ness, Thy clouds drop fat-ness,

goodness, and Thy clouds drop fat-ness, Thy clouds drop fat-ness, Thou

dim.

earth and blessest it, and bless-est it, Thou crown-est the year,
 vis - it - est the earth and bless-est it, Thou crown-est the year,
 and bless-est it, Thou crown-est the year,
 vis - it - est the earth and bless-est it, Thou crown-est the year,

Man. Ped.

Thou crown-est the year with Thy good - ness, Thou
 Thou crown-est the year with Thy good - ness, Thou
 Thou crown-est the year with Thy good - ness, Thou
 Thou crown-est the year with Thy good - ness, Thou

crownest the year with Thy good - ness. *dim.*
 crownest the year with Thy good - ness. *dim.*
 crownest the year with Thy good - ness. *dim.*
 crownest the year with Thy good - ness. *dim.*

Choir Flute Swell. Swell. Man. Ped.

Andante marcato.

f

Who is like unto the Lord our God that hath His dwellings so high?

Who is like unto the Lord our God that hath His dwellings so high?

Who is like unto the Lord our God that hath His dwellings so high?

Andante marcato.

Who is like unto the Lord our God that hath His dwellings so high?

Gt. 8 ft. coup. to full Sw.

p

Who, who is like un-to the Lord our God, that hath His dwelling so high? and yet humbleth Him-

Who, who is like un-to the Lord our God, that hath His dwelling so high? and yet humbleth Him-

Who, who is like un-to the Lord our God, that hath His dwelling so high? and yet humbleth Him-

Who, who is like un-to the Lord our God, that hath His dwelling so high? and yet humbleth Him-

Man. Ped.

ff

self to be- hold the things that are in heaven and in earth, Who is like un-to the

self to be- hold the things that are in heaven and in earth, Who is like un-to the

self to be- hold the things that are in heaven and in earth, Who is like un-to the

self to be- hold the things that are in heaven and in earth, Who is like un-to the

ff

Congregation to join in singing this.

Stately. ♩ = 108.

slower

Lord our God? Who is like un-to the Lord our God? We thank Thee then, O Fa - ther, For

Lord our God? Who is like un-to the Lord our God? We thank Thee then, O Fa - ther, For

Lord our God? Who is like un-to the Lord our God? We thank Thee then, O Fa - ther, For

Lord our God? Who is like un-to the Lord our God? We thank Thee then, O Fa - ther, For

Stately. ♩ = 108.

Full.

all things bright and good, The seed-time and the har-vest, Our life, our health, our food, Ac-

all things bright and good, The seed-time and the har-vest, Our life, our health, our food, Ac-

all things bright and good, The seed-time and the har-vest, Our life, our health, our food, Ac-

all things bright and good, The seed-time and the har-vest, Our life, our health, our food, Ac-

cept the gifts we of - fer For all Thy love im - parts, And what Thou most de-

cept the gifts we of - fer For all Thy love im - parts, And what Thou most de-

cept the gifts we of - fer For all Thy love im - parts, And what Thou most de-

cept the gifts we of - fer For all Thy love im - parts, And what Thou most de-

sir - est, Our hum - ble, thank - ful hearts. All good gifts a - round us, Are
 sir - est, Our hum - ble, thank - ful hearts. All good gifts a - round us, Are
 sir - est, Our hum - ble, thank - ful hearts. All good gifts a - round us, Are
 sir - est, Our hum - ble, thank - ful hearts. All good gifts a - round us, Are

sent from heaven a - bove, Then thank the Lord, Oh!
 sent from heaven a - bove, Then thank the Lord, Oh!
 sent from heaven a - bove, Then thank the Lord, Oh!
 sent from heaven a - bove, Then thank the Lord, Oh!

thank the Lord for all His love. A - men.
 thank the Lord for all His love. A - men.
 thank the Lord for all His love. A - men.
 thank the Lord for all His love. A - men.

Festivals, the provincial festivals, and in all the large towns and cities of Great Britain.

To Mr. Alberto Randegger and the late Sir Joseph Barnby Mr. Watkin Mills expresses much indebtedness; to the latter for most valuable instruction in oratorio work, and to the former for hints and suggestions of various kinds.

The reputation of Mr. Watkin Mills travelled quickly and far, and in the autumn of 1894 he paid his first visit to America. He sang at the Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Wilkes-Barre, and Pittsfield Festivals with great success—in fact, his tour was nothing less than a triumph from beginning to end. The following winter he again visited America, singing at all the principal towns in the States and Canada—at some of them as many as six times. Altogether he has now crossed the Atlantic eleven times. Australia has also been visited twice by Mr. Watkin Mills, and there he received an equally warm and enthusiastic welcome, and scored a big success on every occasion. He was the first to take an entire concert party round the world. That was in 1905. Both in oratorio and in ballads the party was always successful, and created a great impression.

During this visit Mr. Watkin Mills had a strange and unique experience. The eminent basso and his concert party went one day, at the invitation of an obliging official, to look over the Ivanhoe Mine, and while they were down in the bowels of the earth it was suggested by someone who knew the miners' love for music that a song or two would not be amiss. Mr. Mills struck up a quartette from "Flora's Holiday," and the others joined in. Several selections were rendered, and the voices carried along the underground cuttings in a manner which surprised the vocalists. As soon as the singing was begun the miners trooped from all directions, carrying lights in their hands, to the spot where the singers stood, and it was a strange, uncanny sight, says Mr. Mills, to see them standing silently around, their begrimed faces lit up in the glare of a hundred candles, and their bodies thrown into shadow by their uplifted brawny arms. Mr. Mills is a great lover of humanity, and his sympathies with the hard-working miners, who looked almost spectral as they streamed softly from the subterranean passages, made it a real pleasure to him to entertain them in this novel and most impressive fashion.

In Australia many young singers sought Mr. Watkin Mills' advice as to their entering the musical profession. With one exception they were all advised to give up the thought of making singing their life work. This exception, a young girl of whose vocal gifts Mr. Watkin Mills formed a favourable opinion, is still studying in Australia, and he believes she will one day make a name for herself.

Mr. Watkin Mills is very "down" on the tremolo. He says that in one Australian city a certain teacher encourages his pupils to make very free use of this objectionable tremolo, and

many of these pupils came to sing to Mr. Mills. He spoke frankly to them, and told them that whatever they did they must give up the "wobble" and go in for the firm method. One man, who had "tremolitis," so to speak, very badly, he advised to give up singing for a year, otherwise he might never recover. In the kindness of his heart Mr. Mills fears he must have injured the teacher of these young persons, but in the interest of art he could not have given other advice.

"Which is your favourite oratorio?" is a question frequently put to Mr. Watkin Mills. The famous singer's reply is that, from a singer's point of view, the *Creation*, because it contains so much variety and is so melodious; for dramatic effect and dignity, the *Elijah*; but from an all-round standpoint, the *Messiah*.

As a teacher Mr. Watkin Mills' services are in great request, and he is highly successful with his pupils. He is painstaking, patient, and most careful; further, he can so ably "pattern" what he wants repeated by the pupil that no time is lost in conveying effects as they should sound. He loves teaching, and he believes that every singer would sing better if he or she taught as well as sang. He deplors the fact that so many young people, who are not well qualified, give up a paying occupation to go into the world as professional vocalists. Their unwise friends and relatives—who are not competent judges—prophesy that they will make large fortunes, whereas after a large expenditure of time and money and loss of their situations they are unable to get a hearing. Mr. Mills believes a great singer is born and not made. No doubt much can be done to help to make a singer, but the germ must be in him from his birth.

Appearing before the public before being properly qualified is, Mr. Mills declares, the fault of many aspiring vocalists. Students, he says, are too restless and eager to make their first appearance, and should work hard to avoid even a chance of failure. Thorough efficiency must be the first qualification.

By the time these lines are in the hands of my readers Mr. Mills and his party will be starting for a month's tour to some of the chief watering places in England and Wales. Let us hope that a singer so hard-working may find time between rehearsals and performances to indulge his favourite hobby of golf—a sport, by the way, to the moderate exercise of which the celebrated basso attributes much of the strength and youthfulness of his voice. In the autumn he will be away on a longer tour in the large provincial towns. Wherever he goes he will be heartily received. His bright, genial manner, his hearty laugh, his kindness of heart, and his great artistic ability make him popular, not only with all those with whom he comes into close contact, but with concert audiences and the public at large. May he delight music lovers for many a year to come.

BROAD NIB.

Nonconformist Choir Union.

TWENTIETH ANNUAL FESTIVAL.

BY A SPECIAL REPORTER.

TO those who have watched the rise and progress of this useful and helpful Union, it is difficult to think that the period which has elapsed since its formation can possibly amount to twenty years. The passage of time, however, is recorded with faithfulness, and the past years have their own glory of high ideals and glorious achievement. Who can doubt that the work of the Union has contributed in no small measure to the notable advancement in our worship music during recent years? Born in a Nonconformist cathedral, nurtured by enthusiasts in all denominations, the Union was fortunate in its inception and in the earnest solicitude with which the first steps were watched over and guided. Although the composition of the Union changes from year to year, it is pleasing to be able to record that two of the gentlemen who worked hard in the establishment of the Society, and who have spent their strength in the interests of the Union during all the years, were present at the twentieth annual festival at the Crystal Palace on July 4th. Mr. E. Minshall, the president and the choral conductor from the beginning, occupied the conductor's stand for the last time, to the regret of all, but happily not for any more serious reason than a desire on his part to make way for a younger man, which he believes will be for the best interests of the Union. Mr. T. R. Croger, whose letter to this journal was the first step in the good work, is now vice-president and chairman of the Executive Committee.

The day was unfortunately dull so far as the weather was concerned, but the attendance of singers and orchestra was a record one, no less than 4,220 putting in an appearance.

The choral competitions—always an attractive feature of great educational value—were commenced early in the day, and the progress of the contest was watched by a large concourse of interested listeners. The competition was in two divisions, viz.: Class A.—For choirs of not less than twenty-six, and not more than forty voices. Prize: Three guineas and a certificate, with a challenge shield (presented by Mrs. Minshall, to become the property of any choir winning it three years in succession), and a silver-mounted bâton (presented by Mr. J. P. Attwater, Mus.Bac., F.R.C.O.), which shall at once be the personal property of the conductor. Test piece, "If ye then be risen with Christ" (I. Atkins). Class B.—For choirs of not less than sixteen, and not more than twenty-five voices. First prize of three guineas, and a certificate with a silver-mounted bâton (presented by Mr. J. P. Attwater, Mus.Bac., F.R.C.O.), which shall be the personal property of the conductor. A second prize of two guineas and a certificate, if four or more choirs actually compete. Test piece, "Unto Thee, O God" (W. Wolstenholme). The chief interest centred round Class A, in which the award was given to Barnsley United Methodist Choir, the holders of the challenge shield from the previous year's contest. The fine singing of this well-trained body of singers reflected great credit upon their conductor. The first prize in Class B went to Hebden Bridge Baptist Choir, and the second to Rushden Wesleyan Choir. The award of the adjudicator, Mr. Arthur Fagge (conductor of

the London Choral Society and Dulwich Philharmonic Society), is given in full in another column. Mr. Fagge's genial and helpful remarks in giving the award, with his encouragement to the losers, went a long way in softening the blow where disappointment might have been experienced.

Preceding the chief event of the day—the festival concert upon the Handel orchestra—Mr. Leonard C. F. Robson (Ilford Congregational Church) gave an excellent recital upon the great organ, which was highly appreciated. His programme was as follows:—Grand Solemn March, Smart; Caprice, Wolstenholme; Suite, Dolmetsch; Chant Pastoral, Dubois; "Laus Deo," Dubois; March on a Theme by Handel, Guilmant; Melodie, Rubenstein; Fugue, "Rule Britannia," Macfarren; Scherzo, Op. 32, No. 3, H. W. Parker; Finale en Forme d'un Offertoire, Hollins.

Any doubts as to the success of the concert as regards numbers was early dispelled, the choir beginning to gather at least an hour before the time to commence. A steady stream of earnest choristers flowed in by all entrances, until at four o'clock there was hardly a place to be had, except in the extreme corners. Such a host had not been seen for many a year, and the sight must have been an inspiration to Mr. Minshall when he stepped to the stand to wield the bâton at his farewell appearance as conductor.

A shadow fell upon the festival when the organist, Mr. Fountain Meen—respected alike as a most excellent organist and a conscientious worker in the Union—was compelled to be absent from his post through ill-health. He had the satisfaction, however, of being present to hear his substitute, Mr. J. A. Meale, F.R.C.O., musical director of the Wesleyan Settlement at Hull, preside at the organ with tactful ability.

The choral numbers were well chosen, and the choir rose at once to high water-mark in a majestic and sonorous rendering of "Nun Danket." Dr. Warwick Jordan's anthem, "Let all the world in every corner sing," was well sung. The variation of time in short alternate passages was most admirably done, and the unity of voice in the bass recitatives was remarkable. The verse parts were sung by the Leeds Nonconformist Choir Union, whose well-balanced voices provided a welcome feature throughout the programme. The solo vocalist was Miss Violet Ludlow, who contributed the always-fresh "Angels ever bright and fair" in excellent voice. Mr. Josiah Booth's fine festival anthem, "Arm, soldiers of the Lord," was sung in a manner worthy of the excellent writing. The Leeds ladies sang the verse part with much expression. The full orchestral accompaniment was an added attraction, and the piece was very heartily received. The orchestra (consisting of 160 players), conducted by Mr. Frank Idle, A.R.A.M., gave an excellent rendering of Mackenzie's "Benedictus." An effective setting of "Jerusalem the Golden," by Miss L. Z. Dugdale, Mus.Bac. (solo portions by the Leeds Choir), was given with careful attention to expression, and was remarkable for the good clear tone of the soprano singers. Mr. Meale's organ solo was so rapturously received that he had to perform a second

piece. Handel's fine but difficult chorus, "O praise the Lord with one consent," although a little unsteady at one point, was sung in fine Handelian fashion, with a growing confidence which led to a very fine climax, at once forceful and free.

The Union was fortunate in having the presence of Dr. Macnamara, M.P. (Secretary to the Admiralty), who kindly consented to give away the prizes to the winners in the choral contests, and also to present to Mr. Minshall, on behalf of a large body of subscribers from all parts of the country, a handsome bookcase, and a very valuable solid silver shield, founded on Dicksee's "Harmony," suitably inscribed with a record of the long service of the recipient and the high regard in which he is held.

Dr. Macnamara, M.P., in his speech, referred to the influence which good music exerted upon character. As most of them knew, he was himself an old chorister, while Mrs. Macnamara had been a member of the Bristol Nonconformist Choir Union. He remembered that the organist of the church in which he sang as a boy was lame, and walked with a staff, which sometimes played an expressive part in getting them to do their work. He used to think that the staff had some connection with teaching by staff notation. He believed that music affected their natures more than anything else, not even excepting literature. Certainly, so far as he was concerned, he could truthfully say that Mendelssohn, Handel, Beethoven, and Chopin had had far more to do with the formation of his character than all the big writers of the past century put together. He did not mind confessing that, although he had reached the age of forty-six, he still stepped out from his house every morning to his work whistling a tune. He never had quite understood the prejudice against whistling. So many people thought it was an objectionable practice. He did not. He thought it was far more objectionable to sit and gorge on turtle soup, duck, and salmon mayonnaise while a band was cooped up in a corner of

the room to play the intermezzo from "Cavalleria Rusticana," or some other selection. He would make this further confession that his great joy in church or chapel lay mainly in getting hold of a hymn-book with a tune and singing the bass. He rejoiced in the efforts made by Nonconformists to encourage music, for while he recognised the great beauty and mysticism of cathedral choirs, yet, on the other hand, he thought that no anthem, however beautifully rendered by a select choir, could compare with the moving effect of voices singing a

simple melody in unison. He referred to the "revered conductor of this great Union." Mr. Minshall's name had been familiar to him for many years. The music in the Free Churches owes him a debt which can never be measured or repaid for his kindly labours and untiring patience. He concluded by handing to Mr. Minshall the magnificent shield, mounted on oak. As he did so, the singers rose and sang "For he's a jolly good fellow" with much heartiness, followed by cheers for Mr. and Mrs. Minshall. Miss Minshall was presented with a beautiful gold watch bracelet.

Mr. Minshall was much touched by the handsome gifts and the very warm demon-

stration of regard. Speaking with considerable emotion, he thanked them all for their great kindness, which he could not possibly ever forget. He referred to the twenty years of happy service together, and he looked forward with much hope to the future of the Union. He thanked the singers for all their loyalty and attention, and he was very grateful to the members of the Executive Committee for the able support and encouragement they had always so willingly and readily given him.

After such an episode, it is not always easy for a choir to recover immediately, but the second part showed all the good signs observed in the earlier part, and the various part-songs were rendered with precision and delicacy. The items embraced German's "Who is Sylvia?" Hatton's "The Red, Red Rose," "Sing a Joyous Roundelay," closing



with a spirited rendering of "Hail, Dwelling Fair," from "Tannhäuser." The Leeds Choir, conducted by Mr. Jer. Stones, sang Dudley Buck's "Hymn to Music" exceedingly well, and the orchestra contributed "Edward German's "Coronation March." Miss Violet Ludlow repeated her earlier triumphs in Tosti's "Good-bye." The singing of the choir throughout was of a very high order, and reflected the utmost credit on the whole of the members. So was passed the twentieth milestone on the road to permanent usefulness and, we trust, future prosperity of the Nonconformist Choir Union.

The evening attraction was the performance of a new cantata by Mr. Arthur Berridge, "The Prodigal Son," conducted by the composer. A choir of about three hundred voices sang the choruses with good effect, while the solo portions were sung by Miss C. Whitaker, Miss Maude Whitaker, Mr. Jer. Stones, and Mr. Alfred Wood. Mr. Edward Partridge presided at the organ, and Miss Emmie Barber at the piano. The first chorus, "There is joy in heaven," was ably rendered and well received; while "Rejoice in reconciling love," a brightly-written number, was redemanded. The

Speaking generally, the female voices in tone and precision were superior to the male. The tenors, in most instances, were either weak or lacking in good tenor quality, though their efficiency was not impaired by lack of energy.

The test-piece selected in Class A was well designed to display all the qualities upon which judgment had to be passed; but I certainly think that the standard of ability attained by all the choirs in Class B would have justified the Selection Committee in choosing a composition of a more diversified and searching character. The Committee, of course, may have been guided by the standard of last year's competition in this class. If so, it is very satisfactory to record that the test piece on the present occasion was decidedly inadequate, there being but one passage in it that presented any difficulty to any choir.

The classified headings under which the marks were bestowed were as follows:—1, Accuracy of notes, time and pace. 2, Balance of parts and intonation. 3, Quality. 4, Attack and enunciation. 5, Expression. 6, General result.

The maximum number of marks under each

CLASS A.

Choir Number.	Accuracy of Notes, Time, and Pace.	Intonation and Balance.	Quality.	Attack and Enunciation.	Expression.	General Effect.	Total.	Piece Chosen.	Order of Merit.
8}	7	7	6	7	8	7	42	Test Piece : "Good night, beloved" (<i>Pinsuti</i>)	3
	9	8	6	8	7	7	45		
9}	9	8	5	8	10	7	47	Test Piece : "Awake, Æolian lyre."	2
	9	8	5	7	10	6	45		
10}	10	10	9	9	10	9	57	Test Piece : "The river floweth" (<i>Rogers</i>)	1
	9	10	9	8	10	9	55		

cantata is artistic and melodious, and was accorded a hearty reception.

Mr. Berridge, the efficient secretary, was much in evidence during the day, and carried out his numerous duties to the satisfaction of all. To Mr. Ainger and his army of stewards a word of praise must be given for the excellent arrangements made for seating the vast choir. To Mr. W. E. Bryant also many thanks are due for his work in connection with the sale of visitors' tickets, and also to Mr. Ford for much trouble in arranging the "Committee tea."

Mr. Berridge asks us to say that there are a few books left in both notations in cloth and paper covers. Anyone requiring them should apply to him at once at 24, Wallingford Avenue, North Kensington, W.

ADJUDICATOR'S REPORT ON THE CHORAL COMPETITION.

The most satisfactory feature observable during the competition was the evidence of patient and frequent rehearsal of the test-pieces and those chosen by the respective choirs. Though some of these must unquestionably have been rehearsed more frequently than others, in no instance were the pieces presented in a careless or perfunctory manner.

heading was ten. Marks were given for each of the pieces sung—the test piece and that selected by each choir.

In Class A the first position was easily secured by No. 10 (Ebenezer United Methodist Church Choir, Barnsley; Mr. John E. Ward conductor), with 57 and 55 respectively, *i.e.*, 112 out of a possible 120. It would be difficult to speak too highly of the excellent rendering they gave of the test piece and of "The River Floweth" (Rogers), if considerations of enunciation and quality were ignored, and under the latter heading it is more than probable that the great pace of the middle movement of the piece selected by the singers themselves accounted for the falling off.

The choir classified as second in this Class No. 9 (Waltham Abbey Wesleyan Choir; Mr. W. T. Thomson conductor) comes some way behind, with 92 marks, the greatest number being lost by the indifferent quality of the voices. Yet there is no doubt that such excellent training, had it been bestowed upon voices better produced, would have pressed the prize-winners hard.

No. 8 (Portsmouth Wesleyan Church Choir; Mr. C. Weedon conductor), the only other competing choir in this section, suffered, in my estimation, from far too great a formality in the interpretation of both pieces, as much as from the poorness of the tone produced.

The indistinct enunciation of the words was in nearly every instance a great blemish on the performance of each choir in Class B, and the several conductors cannot be urged too earnestly to give their very serious attention to this matter. I think it is generally conceded that, as a nation, our enunciation of our mother-tongue in speaking is less distinguished and distinguishable than is that of any other of the chief nations of Europe; and when it is sufficiently realised that clear and clean enunciation is a most important factor in good singing, a vast improvement in this particular will be the aim of all those whose privilege it is to direct the singing in public worship and in all classes of choral work. By casting the columns of marks vertically, it will be seen that fewest marks were given for this characteristic. Next in order of demerit is the column marked "Quality," and I was very disappointed that the tone in so many cases was so poor. My general observations on

this choir commence the proceedings, was in a measure responsible for the nervous haste that did so much to mar their efforts in the test piece, and impair the quality of the tone through nervousness.

No. 6 (Reigate Congregational Church Choir; Mr. F. J. Buckland, conductor).—This choir, again, was but one mark behind the preceding, and only three from obtaining the second prize. The renderings of both pieces suffered from a lack of elasticity and from apparent spontaneity, resulting in a mechanical performance in each instance. Yet great praise is due for the excellent balance and expression.

No. 7 (High Cross, Tottenham, Congregational Church Choir; Mr. Jas. Edmondson, conductor).—The modulation previously referred to in the test piece was a source of much trouble to these singers, and it was not rendered easier to negotiate by the deliberate pace adopted. The "schooled" impression conveyed in both pieces was only in a measure

CLASS B.

Choir Number.	Accuracy of Notes, Time, and Pace.	Intonation and Balance.	Quality.	Attack and Enunciation.	Expression.	General Effect.	Total.	Piece Chosen.	Order of Merit.
1}	8	7	6	8	10	7	46	Test Piece :	
	8	9	8	6	10	9	50	" On the banks of Allan water."	3
2}	7	6	4	8	8	6	39	Test Piece :	
	6	7	5	6	9	8	41	" The long day closes."	6
3}	7	4	5	5	6	5	32	Test Piece :	
	7	8	6	4	6	7	38	" Love wakes."	7
4}	10	7	8	5	9	8	47	Test Piece :	
	9	7	9	6	10	9	50	" Lullaby of Life " (<i>Leshe</i>).	2
5}	8	7	8	9	9	8	49	Test Piece :	
	9	8	9	8	9	9	52	" Three fishers " (<i>Rogers</i>).	1
6}	9	9	7	7	7	7	46	Test Piece :	
	9	8	8	7	9	8	49	" Moonlight and Music."	4
7}	7	6	7	8	6	6	40	Test Piece :	
	8	8	8	9	7	8	48	" Shepherd's Sabbath."	5

the competing choirs in order of merit extracted from my notes are as follows:—

In Class B, No. 5 (first) (Wainsgate Baptist Church Choir, Hebden Bridge; Mr. A. R. Ashworth, conductor) came to trouble at the modulation into C Flat Major in the test piece. Inclined to sing sharp, this being due to energy, and probably also to the very light accompaniment provided. The selected piece ("Three Fishers") beautifully finished and balanced; enunciation above the average. Total marks, 101, out of a possible 120.

No. 4 (second) (Rushden Park Road Wesleyan Church Choir; Mr. F. Betts, conductor). A very "business-like" rendering of the test piece. The only choir in which the male voices seemed more effective than the female. Total number of marks, 97.

No. 1 (Dartford Wesleyan Church Choir; Mr. Edwin Phillips, conductor).—Only one mark behind the choir awarded second place. It is probable that the chance of the ballot, which made

mitigated by enunciation and attack of more than average merit.

No. 2 (Marlowes Baptist Church Choir, Hemel Hempstead; Mr. Alfred Goodman, conductor).—The quality of tone produced by this body of singers was characterised by a hardness and acidity that detracted greatly from what would otherwise have been an attractive performance of each piece. It was specially noticeable in the soprano section. The painstaking rendering of the "Long Day Closes" would have placed this choir far higher but for this defect and for its very imperfect enunciation.

No. 3 (Camberley, Surrey, Wesleyan Church Choir; Mr. E. V. Mellon, conductor).—The same troublesome modulation in the test piece proved a "stumbling-block" in this case. The female sections were much superior to the male both in quality and execution, and it is generous to conclude that the renderings of both pieces would have been much improved by the expenditure of less vigour in the *forte* passages and a greater de-

termination to secure beauty of tone and a "kinder" expression in the piece selected by them.

In conclusion, I can only rejoice that one and all showed so keen a determination to do their best, and hope that the indication of the respective faults may be a means of encouragement and assistance towards a further striving for the good and improvement of the noble art we all love.

ARTHUR FAGGE,

Conductor of the London Choral Society and of the Dulwich Philharmonic Society.

MUSICAL COMPETITION FESTIVALS

THE Association of Musical Competition Festivals held its annual meeting in Messrs. Broadwood's rooms on July 9th, when there was a good attendance. The Countess of Ancaster presided. Interesting papers were read, and discussion followed.

AMATEUR ORCHESTRAS.

Dr. Sinclair, of Hereford, urged the importance of encouraging the formation of amateur orchestras. A great deal, he said, had been done to stimulate choral activities by the festivals now held, and many small country towns possessed excellent choral societies. Generations ago every village had its small band—often indifferent enough—which played upon occasions of local rejoicing. Now one frequently met with brassbands—sometimes very bad ones. What was needed were orchestras, which would be of use in facilitating the work of existing choral bodies by being able to take part in the performances of oratorios and cantatas. At present the choral societies were hampered for the want of such support. Incidentally, he referred to the increase in the number of violin classes in our elementary schools, as was proved recently by the appearance of some 1,400 boy and girl violinists at the Alexandra Palace. But in the way of the encouragement of orchestral playing much remained for the competition movement to accomplish.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMBINED MUSIC IN COMPETITION FESTIVALS.

Dr. Allen, of Oxford, dealt with this subject. He thinks that too much is made at present of the competitive spirit in connection with these festivals, the result being, in his opinion, to keep them in a groove, and, in a measure, to encourage "pot-hunting" rather than a whole-hearted interest in the cultivation of the best music. Dr. Allen's point, put briefly, was that the spread of good music is not likely to be achieved by the presentation of banners and the like, but rather by sinking the competitive spirit, with its attendant rivalries and jealousies, and in attaching greater importance to the value of combined choral singing and to stimulating the interest of the choirs rather in the music that they sing than in the prospect of carrying off some particular prize. He thought too little attention is paid, under existing conditions, to the rehearsals of the combined choirs at the different festivals, being of opinion that the concluding concert in which the various competitors joined forces should be made the most important feature of each meeting of the kind. The aim of all ought to be to make the music taken in hand by the choirs progressive in its scope, character, and value, and, provided efforts were concentrated in this direction, he saw no reason why in time such choirs as now met in rivalry in different parts of the country should not be able to undertake a work like Beethoven's Mass in D.

THE COMPETITION MOVEMENT IN LONDON

was Miss Cecilia Hill's subject. She thought it ought to be easier in London to organise a great festival on modern competitive lines than anywhere else. There would be no lack of enthusiasm, while the facilities for obtaining support for any big movement were greater in the metropolis than elsewhere. Local pride, she admitted, such as stimulated effort in country towns, did not exist in London, but it could be fostered. Could not much be accomplished in the direction of instilling into the masses some such love of really good music as they now felt for the people's tunes, and prompted them to join enthusiastically in singing the refrains of music-hall songs? By raising the popular standard of taste something tangible would be achieved towards realising a scheme for national opera. After enumerating the various festivals now held in and near London, such as the Alexandra Palace gathering, and the new enterprise lately carried out with success at the People's Palace, Miss Hill suggested the possibility in the future of united efforts being put forward by the organisers of the different gatherings, with a view to the promotion of a London competition festival, in which all the others now held could be combined into one. This should be London's Eisteddfod, paving the way, perhaps, for an Imperial festival, in which choirs and other bodies from the Colonies might compete, and an international festival bringing into the arena of contests competition from France, Germany, Russia, Italy, and other European countries.

Correspondence.

NONCONFORMIST CHOIR UNION FESTIVAL.

To the Editor of THE MUSICAL JOURNAL.

DEAR SIR,—Having recovered from my recent long and serious illness, will you kindly allow me a little space in order to express my sincere thanks for the kind and sympathetic messages I received from those attending the final rehearsal at the City Temple and from other rehearsals, in addition to many personal expressions of sympathy? I can assure all my friends that their kind thoughts were most cordially appreciated.

Though much regretting my inability to discharge my usual duty, I was glad to be able to attend on this specially interesting occasion, and to hear so successful a performance.

FOUNTAIN MEEN.

HOLIDAY MUSIC AT SEASIDE CHURCHES.

To the Editor of THE MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—The holiday season is fast approaching. I hope the organists at the seaside will give us some of their best music during August and September. Last year I came home very disappointed, not having heard one really artistic voluntary. In the small churches I attended I would have preferred good hymn tunes nicely played as voluntaries to some of the pieces I heard, at which one hardly knew whether to laugh or to cry. The sight of a crowded church should be a fine inspiration to bring forth the best. I remember one holiday a certain organist so charmed us that I felt it an honour, on returning home, to quickly forward him a nice useful present.—Yours faithfully,
COUNTRY ORGANIST.

Echoes from the Churches.

A copy of "The Choirmaster," by John Adcock, will be sent every month to the writer of the best paragraph under this heading. Paragraphs should be sent direct to the Editor by the 17th of the month. The prize this month is awarded to Mr. C. Webb.

METROPOLITAN.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—Local interest in the Victoria Hospital was evidenced on Wednesday evening, July 8th, when at the Canbury Gardens Bandstand the Kingston Congregational Church Choir gave their tenth open-air concert. The choir has demonstrated its capacity on many occasions, and the reputation it bears would at all times ensure for it a large audience. The programme comprised seventeen items, eight of which were part-songs by the choir. Outstanding among these were Eaton Fanning's "Song of the Vikings," and Benedict's "Hunting Song," the stirring expression of the former making it perhaps the more popular item. A bracketed pair by Pinsuti, "Phyllis' Choice" and "There is Music by the River," were much enjoyed, and the choir also contributed "Eldorado," another of this eminent composer's works. A finely rendered item also was Wagner's chorus from "Tannhäuser," "Hail, Dwelling Fair." Other part-songs were "Summer Time," "The Red, Red Rose," and "Who is Sylvia?" In all these the choir were at their best, amply demonstrating the results of their indefatigable training by the conductor, Mr. G. Eaton Hart. Mr. Samuel Masters, Mr. Sydney Hart, and Miss Jessie Hart gave vocal solos, which were much appreciated; and Mr. C. Rodwell played two cornet solos, which were loudly applauded. The accompanists were Mr. Harry Wellard, A.R.C.M., and Miss Annie Wellard. Collecting boxes were circulated among the audience during the concert, and £9 6s. 4d. was collected for the Hospital fund. This is the tenth year of the choir's outdoor concerts in aid of local charities. At its inception the idea was rather a novel one, and large sums were collected during the earlier years, amounting in one case to a donation of £28. During the ten years the choir has contributed to the following objects:—Indian Famine Fund, £15; Kingston Cripples Guild, £12 10s. 3d.; Kingston Victoria Hospital, £124 9s. 2d.; total, £151 19s. 5d.

LEYTON.—The Wesleyan Church choir held their annual festival on Sunday, July 5th. The morning service was conducted by the Rev. T. Rippon (superintendent of the circuit), and the choir rendered in their usual efficient manner the chorus, "Worthy is the Lamb" (Handel). In the evening, after a short service, conducted by the resident minister, the Rev. Frank Hall, selections from Haydn's "Creation" were given by the choir. The principal soloists were Miss Winifred Tisshaw (soprano), Mr. W. Vawdrey Ley (tenor), and Mr. C. Winter Coppin (bass). Mr. F. Taylor presided at the organ, and the choir were in the capable hands of their choirmaster, Dr. C. H. Panting.

PROVINCIAL.

BARRY (GLAM.).—The Wesleyan Church Choir Festival was held on the 12th July, under the able leadership of Mr. H. C. T. Ireland, the organist. At the morning and evening services the following music was sung:—Introits, "Almighty Father, gracious Lord," "We gather now before Thy throne"; anthems, "What are these?" (Stainer), "Lift up your heads" (Hopkins), and the "Te

Deum" (Hopkins). In the afternoon, at the special musical service, before a crowded congregation, the choir rendered the anthems "Seek ye the Lord" (Roberts), "Oh for a closer walk with God" (Foster), "Praise the Lord," from Mozart's First Mass. The solos taken from the Elijah, "Hear ye Israel," "O rest in the Lord," "If with all your hearts," "It is enough," were sung by Madame Nancy Wyles, Mrs. Gwilym Davies, Mr. Trenchard, and Mr. Dan Evans respectively, who also rendered the quartet "God is a Spirit" (Bennett), "The Angels' Night Song" (Parry), and taking the solos, duets, and quartets in the anthems. Special mention must be made of the manner in which the choir effectively rendered all they had to do, the attack, the expression, and the singing generally being all that could be desired, showing that much time and attention had been devoted to the various works given. All the soloists sang with fine feeling and taste.

BURTON-ON-TRENT.—A new organ costing £500 has been erected in Hill Street Baptist Church.

DRIFFIELD.—Mr. Joseph Shepherdson, who has so efficiently presided at the organ in the Congregational Church for the last twenty-four years, has been presented with a black marble timepiece.

HIGH WYCOMBE.—Sunday-school anniversary services were held in Oxford-road Chapel on July 5th. At all the services several recitations were given by the children. The evening service was musically the most important. The choir and orchestra (numbering together about seventy) rendered very effectively "Praise ye the Father" (Gounod), "Jerusalem the Golden" (Dugdale), "Mighty Lord" (Gounod), "Let all the world in every corner sing" (Warwick Jordan). The day was altogether very successful. There were large congregations and good collections.

IPSWICH.—The organ in Crown Street Congregational Church has been enlarged at a cost of £220.

KING'S LYNN.—On Sunday, June 28th, the annual festival of the London Road Wesleyan School was held at Tower Street Church, when the services were conducted by the superintendent minister, Rev. Wm. Hunt. During the day the children and choir sang anthems and hymns specially prepared for the occasion, including, among others, in the morning, "Thine O Lord is the greatness" (J. Kent) and "The Son of God goes forth to war" (A. Page); and in the evening, "The Sons of Light" (E. Nichol), "Nearer my God to Thee" (A. Riddle), and "Draw the sword, Christian" (Lane Frost). At the afternoon service "The Five Steps" was rendered (in part), the children appearing to take a very intelligent interest in carrying out its details. On Monday evening, June 29th, some of the above-named selections were repeated in the London Road Church, when both the chairman, W. R. Smith, Esq. (Mayor), and the Rev. Wm. Hunt spoke in highly appreciative terms of the children's singing. Mr. George Dines presided at the organ on the Sunday morning and evening; Mr. Plowright in the afternoon. Miss May Smith was at the piano at each service, whilst Mr. Bush was the cornettist. Mr. C. Webb conducted.

RHYL.—The annual meeting of the North Wales English Baptist Union was held at Rhyl. Mr. W. D. Jones, president, read a paper on "Congregational Singing." It was possible, he said, to have correct rendering of tunes without real worship. It was one thing to move the lip and bend the knee, but another to praise God and serve Him with the heart. He pleaded for all to enter into the soul of the hymns and to worship in their singing. In their own Union there were churches years behind the times, their singing being much out of date in fervency and reverence. They should have these defects removed. The Rev. Mr. Humphreys, of Ponkey, did not favour choirs. The singing should not be the function of the few, but of the whole congregation. They should welcome musical instruments.

SEELY PARK, BIRMINGHAM.—Sunday-school anniversary services were held in the Baptist Church on Sunday, July 5th, an event which in the round of church life is looked forward to with much interest—the day of days when parents turn out to do honour to the children who for weeks, maybe, have in the home filled quiet moments with the melodies of favourite tunes which have been taught them by the Sunday-school conductor, and who anticipates the best efforts of the songsters on anniversary day. Mr. Z. Sanders, who, for a number of years, has filled this office, again was in command of some 150 voices, assisted by the church choir. The anthem selected was the well-seasoned "The heavens are telling," and was, together with the special hymns, well rendered. Good congregations were the order of the day, but specially was this the case at eventide, when the Rev. T. G. Hunter, of Wycliff Baptist Church, preached to a crowded congregation.

SOUTHAMPTON.—Mr. F. J. Hallum, the deputy organist of Avenue Congregational Church, has been presented with an inlaid mahogany bureau in recognition of his services.

TORRINGTON.—Miss Lily Hearn, the organist of the Baptist Church, has been presented with a walnut overmantel on her marriage.

TOTTINGTUN.—Mr. R. H. Wilson, Mus. Bac., who for the last twenty-five years has given his assistance at anniversary services at the Congregational Church, has been presented with a gold watch and chain.

WHITCHURCH (SALOP).—The Wesleyan Sunday-school anniversary services were held on Sunday, July 5th. The children and choir, trained and accompanied on the organ by Mrs. J. H. Pickard, sang their selected pieces admirably, and in the musical portion of the day's programme they fully sustained their high reputation. The Rev. E. I. Lyndon (late minister) was the preacher, and in the afternoon the children were addressed by Mr. R. T. Smith.

The Dover Pageant is a magnificent show, and well worth seeing. The thought and labour bestowed upon the preparations must have been immense. Mr. H. J. Taylor, F.R.C.O., the able Borough Organist, has specially written most of the music, and has succeeded in producing some very effective pieces, viz., "A Dirge on the Death of Gawayne," "The Ballad of S. Martin" (nicely sung by Miss Boyton), "Let us be glad," "The Morris Dance," and "All Hail to Thee!" The musical performance is altogether very praiseworthy, and reflects great credit on Mr. Taylor, who conducts, and his host.

Staccato Notes.

Herr Carl Deichmann, the well-known violinist, recently died, aged eighty-one.

Dr. Bunnett has been appointed organist of the nave services at Norwich Cathedral.

The Philharmonic Society will give three concerts in the early winter—a new departure.

The Queen's Hall Promenade Concerts will begin on Aug. 15th, and run on till Oct. 24th.

Madame Melba sent £2,000 to the London Hospital, the proceeds of her Covent Garden matinée.

One hundred and sixty new members of the Royal College of Organists have been enrolled during the past year.

Ernst von Mendelssohn, the composer's nephew, has presented the Royal Library of Berlin with his uncle's collection of musical manuscripts.

The average number of students at the Guildhall School of Music last year was 2,508, and the fees amounted to £23,283. The professors received £16,811 of that.

The Prince of Wales presided at the twenty-fifth annual general meeting of the Corporation of the Royal College of Music held at Marlborough House on July 11th.

A MOST enjoyable recital was given in the Steinway Hall, on July 8th, by two Australians, Mr. C. Stanley Newman, bass, and Mr. H. Brewster-Jones, pianist. Mr. Newman, who possesses a rich, well-produced voice, gave great pleasure with his refined singing of six songs from Schumann's "Dichterliebe." He was also heard to advantage in Clutnam's song cycle, "Songs from the Turkish Hills." His smooth singing of Dr. Blow's charming old English song, "The Self-Banished," was in excellent taste, and served to contrast his successful rendering of Battishill's little known but very effective "When valiant Ammon" (1764), which was sung with fine verve. Mr. Brewster-Jones gave pleasing renderings of Chopin's "Impromptu in G flat," and "Ballade in A flat." His excellent playing of the "Sonata in B flat minor" of Albanesi delighted the audience. His last group served to exhibit the soundness of Mr. Jones's work. He completely mastered the modern intricacies of Debussy's "Danse" (played for the first time in London), and Liszt's "Rhapsodie Hongroise," No. 2, was played with rare spirit, and served to further show his excellent technique.

To Correspondents.

Several items are held over.

R. F.—He died in 1842.

QUERY.—(1) Yes. (2) No. (3) Novello and Co. (4) We cannot trace it.

G. W. S.—The melody on the swell oboe, and the accompaniment on choir dulciana.

W. W.—Go to the nearest good teacher you have, and be guided by him.

The following are thanked for their communications:—R. W. (Cardiff), T. T. (Ripon), J. T. (Muswell Hill), F. B. (Bristol), E. D. T. (Morning-side), J. J. (Flint), W. M. (Wolverhampton), E. E. (Penzance).



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